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Looking for Serge Gainsbourg

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Looking for Serge Gainsbourg

Abstract

Lying

on one of the graves

you kiss

the day-moon

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Professor Catherine Cole is Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Wollongong. She has published novels and two non-fiction books. She is the editor of the anthology, *The Perfume River: Writing from Vietnam* and co-editor with McNeil and Karaminas of *Fashion in Fiction: Text and Clothing in Literature, Film and Television*, (Berg UK and USA, May 2009). She also has published poetry, short stories, essays and reviews.



Looking for Serge Gainsbourg

Lying

on one of the graves

you kiss

the day-moon

(fading above bare branches).

Lover don't catch a cold.

Don't scandalise the tourists.

Don't upset the cemetery attendants,

the grieving relatives.

This hunt

for Serge

is no laughing matter

I laugh

at the moon

at your lips

at the cemetery's cats

making a wide

arc around

a crazy man

in a bright red scarf

a woman in stitches.

'Go,'

you say

'Allez trouvez l'homme.'

So I go

with my map

my gloved hands

dusted with snow

Je t'aime.

‘Serge?’ I ask an old man
watering,

‘Où et Serge?’

‘Tout près.’

He is close

(a little stream of water, a bare shrub, surely not lilac)

‘*Y’a pas de soleil sous la terre,*’ the man sings

Everyone’s a fan.

Près

And on Serge’s grave I find:

a love letter,

four metro tickets

and scrawled on the back of a café tab,

moi je ne tiens a rien

plus que toi.

manque de toi

je suis la moitié fou

and a

small smooth grey pebble

to take back to you.